

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 5, 2004

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

We are writing to urge you to immediately direct significant federal resources to protect and secure institutions known to be terrorist targets. As you know, Secretary Ridge announced earlier this week that a financial institution in Newark, New Jersey, was one of the five most likely targets for an imminent al-Qaeda attack within the United States.

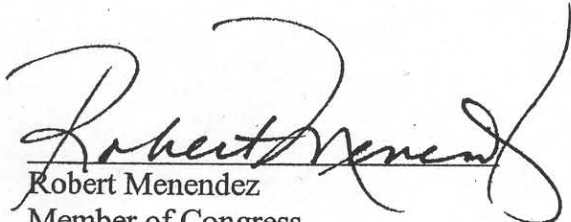
New Jersey faces unique threats and burdens due to its proximity to New York City and the many potential targets in the state. New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation and is home to at least a dozen of the nation's sites that have already been placed on the FBI's "National Critical Infrastructure Site" list. It has an unparalleled collection of infrastructure of all types located within densely populated areas, including the second-largest seaport in the nation, the third-busiest airport in the country, and facilities (chemical plants and transportation nodes) that have been documented by intelligence gained from al Qaeda operatives as compelling targets. The Environmental Protection Agency has determined that our state has 11 separate sites where a chemical release could poison more than 1 million people. In fact, a June report by the Federal Bureau of Investigation found that the area between Port Newark and Newark International Airport is the "most dangerous two miles in the United States when it comes to terrorism."

The ongoing and increasing terror risk for the region we represent necessitates that our local and state governments are adequately equipped to deal with these threats. We remain concerned that our state, local, and municipal entities – and particularly first responders – continue to face risks that they are not sufficiently equipped to handle. For the past two years, inadequate funding for training and equipment has undermined the ability of the police, fire, and other emergency personnel to secure the high target areas around Newark and throughout New Jersey. As Secretary Ridge's announcement marks


the first time since 9/11 that specific targets have been publicly identified, we find it only logical that funds would be distributed appropriately to ensure that those targets are adequately protected. These high-risk regions should not and cannot wait for additional funds, as we do not know how imminent the threat they face could be.

Given the ongoing critical threat, the federal government has a responsibility to help our state as it works to secure points of vulnerability. We therefore urge you to immediately release funds from the Department of Homeland Security's Urban Area Security Initiative so that state and local governments have the resources necessary to deal with the heightened security needs throughout New Jersey. We look forward to your response.


Sincerely,



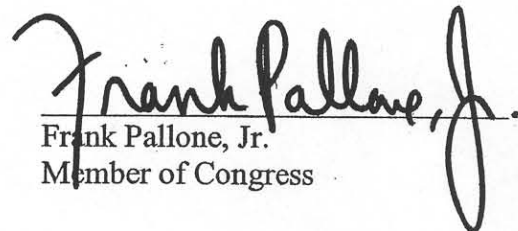
Robert Menendez
Member of Congress



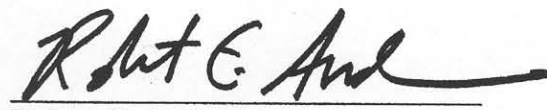
Donald M. Payne
Member of Congress



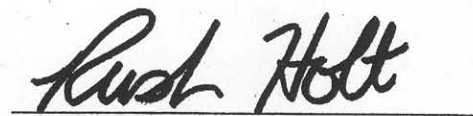
Steven R. Rothman
Member of Congress



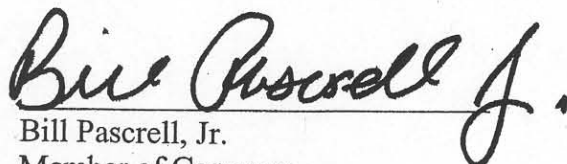
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Robert E. Andrews
Member of Congress



Rush D. Holt
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress